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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: WESTERN HEMISPHERE: LEFTIST LEANINGS IN
LATIN AMERICA; SAO PAULO

"On The Warpath"

Political columnist Eliane Cantanhede opined in liberal, largest national circulation daily Folha de S. Paulo (5/3): "Hugo Chvez and Evo Morales use oil and gas as weapons, while Lula attacks with ethanol.... Commander Fidel has already positioned himself in support of Chvez's army by trying to disarm biofuels under the pretext that they will reduce crops everywhere and increase hunger worldwide. It is likely that another support will also come from Ecuador, where President Rafael Correa was just inaugurated, but has not joined any of the parties involved. Like Fidel, Commander Bush has already preventively positioned himself, but against Chvez and Morales, and pro Lula and biofuels. Brazil and the US are united in this war. And it is likely that [Uruguay's] Tabar Vzquez, despite the trend of alliances among left wings, will try to be at least neutral. He is not expected to align with Chvez and Morales against Lula and Bush. After all, Uruguay depends on beef to survive, and this means selling the product to the US.... Amidst all this, there is a president with a very peculiar behavior: Nestor Kirchner, of Argentina. He does not want to get involved in oil vs. biofuel wars.... He often provokes Lula and signs agreements with Chvez. Not for ideology, but pragmatically. It is strange, but Lula is the anti-Chvez leader, and for this reason the agreements with Morales regarding the price of Petrobras oil refineries must be carefully analyzed. At the end of the day, war is war and Brazil does not need to win much, but cannot afford to lose."

McMullen